Rehabilitation of closed sugar mills in Bihar

†32. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sugar industry in Bihar has completely been closed and destroyed today while at some point of time this State was the largest producer of sugar in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have taken fresh initiatives and efforts to rehabilitate all the closed and sick sugar mills in Bihar; and

(c) if so, the complete details thereof in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir. In the early 1940s, 28 sugar factories out of 148 sugar factories in the country were in Bihar and this 20% of the sugar industry contributed 26% of the total sugar production of the country. In the current sugar year, 2005-06, 9 private sugar mills out of 28 sugar mills are in operation, collectively contributing to 2% of the total sugar production in the country. However, 15 sugar mills of Bihar State Sugar Corporation, 3 sugar mills of BIC Group and 1 sugar mill of private sector are lying closed.

(b) and (c) It is the responsibility of the entrepreneur to take steps to reactivate/revive the closed sugar mills as per techno economic viability of the project.

Buffer stock of wheat

33. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the buffer stock of wheat is alarmingly low leading to rise in prices of wheat;

(b) if so, the foodgrain stock available with Government, as on January, 2006;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.